

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, if additional extensions of time are necessary to prevent abandonment of this application, then such extensions of time are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), and any fees required therefor (including fees for net addition of claims) are hereby authorized to be charged to our Deposit Account No. 19-0036.

Amendments

In the Claims:

Please substitute the following claim 42 for the pending claim 42:

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42. (Once Amended) Isolated *E. coli* lacking endogenous plasmids and having a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of a reference microorganism selected from the group consisting of *E. coli* MM294, DH5α and DH10B.

~~Please substitute the following claim 43 for the pending claim 43:~~

43. (Once Amended) The isolated *E. coli* of claim 42, wherein said isolated *E. coli* are *E. coli* strain W or strain C.

~~Please substitute the following claim 44 for the pending claim 44:~~

44. (Once Amended) The isolated *E. coli* of claim 43, wherein said isolated *E. coli* are selected from a group consisting of BRL3781, BRL3784 and *recA*⁻ derivatives thereof.

45. (Once Amended) The isolated *E. coli* of claim 42, wherein said isolated *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

~~Please substitute the following claim 46 for the pending claim 46:~~

46. (Once Amended) The isolated *E. coli* of claim 42, wherein said isolated *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* DH5 α .

~~Please substitute the following claim 47 for the pending claim 47:~~

47. (Once Amended) The isolated *E. coli* of claim 42, wherein said isolated *E. coli* have a growth rate that is 5-200% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

~~Please substitute the following claim 48 for the pending claim 48:~~

48. (Once Amended) A method of cloning, comprising:

- (a) obtaining competent *E. coli*;
- (b) transforming said competent *E. coli* with at least one vector;
- (c) selecting transformed *E. coli* containing said at least one vector; and
- (d) culturing said transformed *E. coli*;

wherein said *E. coli* are *E. coli* having a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of a reference microorganism selected from the group consisting of *E. coli* MM294, DH5 α and DH10B.

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~~Please substitute the following claim 49 for the pending claim 49:~~

49. (Once Amended) The method of claim 48, wherein said *E. coli* are *E. coli* strain W or strain C.

~~Please substitute the following claim 50 for the pending claim 50:~~

50. (Once Amended) The method of claim 49, wherein said *E. coli* do not contain endogenous vectors.

Please substitute the following claim 55 for the pending claim 55:

55. (Once Amended) The method of claim 48, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

~~Please substitute the following claim 56 for the pending claim 56:~~

56. (Once Amended) The method of claim 48, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* DH5 α .

~~Please substitute the following claim 57 for the pending claim 57:~~

57. (Once Amended) The method of claim 48, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is 5-200% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

~~Please substitute the following claim 58 for the pending claim 58:~~

58. (Once Amended) A method of producing a protein or peptide, comprising:

(a) obtaining competent *E. coli*;

(b) transforming into said competent *E. coli* a vector containing a gene encoding a protein or peptide; and

(c) culturing said transformed *E. coli* under conditions that cause said transformed *E. coli* to produce said protein or peptide;

wherein said *E. coli* are *E. coli* having a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of a reference microorganism selected from the group consisting of *E. coli* MM294, DH5 α and DH10B.

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~~Please substitute the following claim 59 for the pending claim 59:—~~

59. (Once Amended) The method of claim 58, wherein said *E. coli* are *E. coli* strain W or strain C.

~~Please substitute the following claim 60 for the pending claim 60:—~~

60. (Once Amended) The method of claim 59, wherein said *E. coli* do not contain endogenous plasmids.

~~Please substitute the following claim 61 for the pending claim 61:—~~

61. (Once Amended) The method of claim 58, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

~~Please substitute the following claim 62 for the pending claim 62:—~~

62. (Once Amended) The method of claim 58, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* DH5 α .

~~Please substitute the following claim 63 for the pending claim 63:~~

63. (Once Amended) The method of claim 58, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is 5-200% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

~~Please substitute the following claim 64 for the pending claim 64:~~

64. (Once Amended) A method of producing *E. coli* for cloning, comprising:

- (a) obtaining *E. coli* having endogenous plasmids and having a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of a reference microorganism selected from the group consisting of *E. coli* MM294, DH5a and DH10B; and
- (b) curing said *E. coli* of endogenous plasmids.

~~Please substitute the following claim 65 for the pending claim 65:~~

65. (Once Amended) The method of claim 64, wherein said *E. coli* are *E. coli* strain W or strain C.

~~Please substitute the following claim 66 for the pending claim 66:~~

66. (Once Amended) The method according to claim 64, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

~~Please substitute the following claim 67 for the pending claim 67:~~

67. (Once Amended) The method according to claim 64, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* DH5a.

~~Please substitute the following claim 68 for the pending claim 68:~~

68. (Once Amended) The method of claim 64, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is 5-200% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

~~Please substitute the following claim 69 for the pending claim 69:~~

69. (Once Amended) A method of transforming *E. coli*, comprising:

- (a) obtaining competent *E. coli*;
- (b) incubating said *E. coli* in the presence of one or more vectors under conditions which cause said one or more vectors to be taken up by said *E. coli*; and
- (c) culturing said *E. coli*;

wherein said *E. coli* are *E. coli* having a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of a reference microorganism selected from the group consisting of *E. coli* MM294, DH5 α and DH10B.

~~Please substitute the following claim 70 for the pending claim 70:~~

70. (Once Amended) The method of claim 69, wherein said *E. coli* are *E. coli* strain W or strain C.

~~Please substitute the following claim 71 for the pending claim 71:~~

71. (Once Amended) The method of claim 70, wherein said *E. coli* do not contain endogenous plasmids.

~~Please substitute the following claim 72 for the pending claim 72:~~

72. (Once Amended) The method according to claim 69, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

~~Please substitute the following claim 73 for the pending claim 73:~~

73. (Once Amended) The method according to claim 69, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* DH5 α .

~~Please substitute the following claim 74 for the pending claim 74:~~

74. (Once Amended) The method of claim 69, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is 5-200% greater than the growth rate of MM294.

~~Please substitute the following claim 75 for the pending claim 75:~~

75. (Once Amended) A kit for cloning comprising a container containing *E. coli* having a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of a reference microorganism selected from the group consisting of *E. coli* MM294, DH5 α and DH10B.

~~Please substitute the following claim 79 for the pending claim 79:~~

79. (Once Amended) The kit of claim 75, wherein said *E. coli* contained within said kit are competent.

~~Please substitute the following claim 80 for the pending claim 80:~~

80. (Once Amended) The kit of claim 79, wherein said *E. coli* contained within said kit are chemically competent.

~~Please substitute the following claim 81 for the pending claim 81:~~

81. (Once Amended) The kit of claim 79, wherein said *E. coli* contained within said kit are electrocompetent.

~~Please substitute the following claim 82 for the pending claim 82:~~

82. (Once Amended) The kit of claim 75, wherein said *E. coli* contained within said kit have a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

~~Please substitute the following claim 83 for the pending claim 83:~~

83. (Once Amended) The kit of claim 75, wherein said *E. coli* contained within said kit have a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* DH5a.

~~Please substitute the following claim 84 for the pending claim 84:~~

84. (Once Amended) The kit of claim 75, wherein said *E. coli* contained within said kit have a growth rate that is 5-200% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

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~~Please substitute the following claim 85 for the pending claim 85:~~

85. (Once Amended) A composition comprising *E. coli*, wherein said *E. coli* of said composition have a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of a reference microorganism selected from the group consisting of *E. coli* MM294, DH5 α and DH10B.

~~Please substitute the following claim 88 for the pending claim 88:~~

88. (Once Amended) The composition of claim 85, wherein said *E. coli* of said composition have a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

~~Please substitute the following claim 89 for the pending claim 89:~~

89. (Once Amended) The composition of claim 85, wherein said *E. coli* of said composition have a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* DH5 α .

~~Please substitute the following claim 90 for the pending claim 90:~~

90. (Once Amended) The composition of claim 85, wherein said *E. coli* of said composition have a growth rate that is 5-200% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

~~Please substitute the following claim 91 for the pending claim 91:~~

91. (Once Amended) A method of making competent *E. coli*, comprising:

(a) obtaining *E. coli* having a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of a reference microorganism selected from the group consisting of *E. coli* MM294, DH5 α and DH10B; and

(b) treating said *E. coli* to make it competent.

~~Please substitute the following claim 92 for the pending claim 92.~~

92. (Once Amended) The method of claim 91, further comprising the step of curing said *E. coli* of endogenous vectors.

~~Please substitute the following claim 93 for the pending claim 93:~~

93. (Once Amended) The method of claim 91, wherein said *E. coli* are *E. coli* strain W or strain C.

~~Please substitute the following claim 94 for the pending claim 94:~~

94. (Once Amended) The method of claim 91, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

~~Please substitute the following claim 95 for the pending claim 95:~~

95. (Once Amended) The method of claim 91, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* DH5 α .

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~~Please substitute the following claim 96 for the pending claim 96:—~~

96. (Once Amended) The method of claim 91, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is 5-200% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

~~Please substitute the following claim 97 for the pending claim 97:—~~

97. (Once Amended) Competent *E. coli* having a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of a reference microorganism selected from the group consisting of *E. coli* MM294, DH5 α and DH10B; wherein said competent *E. coli* are produced according to the method of claim 91.

~~Please substitute the following claim 98 for the pending claim 98:—~~

98. (Once Amended) Competent *E. coli* having a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of a reference microorganism selected from the group consisting of *E. coli* MM294, DH5 α and DH10B; wherein said competent *E. coli* are produced according to the method of claim 92.

~~Please substitute the following claim 99 for the pending claim 99:—~~

99. (Once Amended) Competent *E. coli* having a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of a reference microorganism selected from the group consisting of *E. coli* MM294, DH5 α and DH10B; wherein said competent *E. coli* are produced according to the method of claim 93.

~~Please substitute the following claim 100 for the pending claim 100.~~

100. (Once Amended) Competent *E. coli* having a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294; wherein said competent *E. coli* are produced according to the method of claim 94.

~~Please substitute the following claim 101 for the pending claim 101.~~

101. (Once Amended) Competent *E. coli* having a growth rate that is at least 5% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* DH5 α ; wherein said competent *E. coli* are produced according to the method of claim 95.

~~Please substitute the following claim 102 for the pending claim 102:~~

102. (Once Amended) Competent *E. coli* having a growth rate that is 5-200% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294; wherein said competent *E. coli* are produced according to the method of claim 96.

Please add the following new claims:

103. (New) The isolated *E. coli* of claim 42, wherein said isolated *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 25% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

104. (New) The isolated *E. coli* of claim 42, wherein said isolated *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 50% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

105. (New) The isolated *E. coli* of claim 42, wherein said isolated *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 100% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

106. (New) The method of claim 48, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 25% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

107. (New) The method of claim 48, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 50% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

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108. (New) The method of claim 48, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 100% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

109. (New) The method of claim 58, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 25% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

110. (New) The method of claim 58, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 50% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

111. (New) The method of claim 58, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 100% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

112. (New) The method of claim 64, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 25% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

113. (New) The method of claim 64, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 50% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

114. (New) The method of claim 64, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 100% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

115. (New) The method of claim 69, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 25% greater than the growth rate of MM294.

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116. (New) The method of claim 69, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 50% greater than the growth rate of MM294.

117. (New) The method of claim 69, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 100% greater than the growth rate of MM294.

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118. (New) The kit of claim 75, wherein said *E. coli* contained within said kit have a growth rate that is at least 25% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

119. (New) The kit of claim 75, wherein said *E. coli* contained within said kit have a growth rate that is at least 50% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

120. (New) The kit of claim 75, wherein said *E. coli* contained within said kit have a growth rate that is at least 100% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

121. (New) The composition of claim 85, wherein said *E. coli* of said composition have a growth rate that is at least 25% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

122. (New) The composition of claim 85, wherein said *E. coli* of said composition have a growth rate that is at least 50% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

123. (New) The composition of claim 85, wherein said *E. coli* of said composition have a growth rate that is at least 100% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

124. (New) The method of claim 91, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 25% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

125. (New) The method of claim 91, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 50% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

126. (New) The method of claim 91, wherein said *E. coli* have a growth rate that is at least 100% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294.

127. (New) Competent *E. coli* having a growth rate that is at least 25% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294; wherein said competent *E. coli* are produced according to the method of claim 91.

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128. (New) Competent *E. coli* having a growth rate that is at least 50% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294; wherein said competent *E. coli* are produced according to the method of claim 91.

129. (New) Competent *E. coli* having a growth rate that is at least 100% greater than the growth rate of *E. coli* MM294; wherein said competent *E. coli* are produced according to the method of claim 91.